

A SHORT
A C C O U N T
OF THE
D E A T H

MARY LANGSON,
Of TAXAL, in CHESHIRE;

Who died *January* the 29th, 1769. in the
twentieth year of her age.

Come and hear, all ye that fear GOD, and I will declare
what he hath done for my soul. *Psalms* lxxvi. 16.

O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?
The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the
law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory,
through our Lord Jesus Christ. *1 Cor.* xv. 55, 56, 57.

L O N D O N:

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Country. 1795.

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WHEN MARY LANGSON was about fourteen years of age, it pleased God to awaken her by the preaching of the gospel; and soon after, she received a clear sense of his pardoning love, in the enjoyment of which she continued, though not exempted from those trials and temptations which are common to believers. — From her first hearing the preaching, she was diligent in the use of all the means of grace, both private and public; and though the preaching was seldom near, she attended at every possible opportunity.

She was constant at meeting her Class; and those who were most acquainted with her, being of the same family, observed that she always expressed the state of her soul, just as it was, and manifested such a spirit of sincerity in all her deportment, as convinced them that she was an *Israelite indeed*, in whom was no guile.

Her step-mother being rendered incapable of managing the affairs of the house through affliction, the care of a young family in a great measure devolved on her, which with the necessary attendance upon her helpless step-mother, brought upon her considerable exercises and trials, for one of such tender years; yet being inwardly strengthened for the performance of these duties, she manifested as much affection towards her, as if she had been her own mother, (an example too rarely seen in such cases;) and was enabled to go through her constantly trying circumstances with unwearied patience; altho' by these means she was deprived of providing for herself such sort of apparel, &c. as those of her age usually expect, and may perhaps innocently enjoy.

Having been tried and in some measure entangled in her affections, she was sensible of a decline in her spiritual consolations; but through the mercy of God, this lasted not long: for she

rested not till she had recovered all she had lost : so that she was enabled to testify to a Christian friend, while she remained in health, " I find my heart loose from every creature, and all created good, and wholly fixed on God : this is the desire of my soul,

" O that I might walk with God,
Jesus, my companion be ;
Lead me to thy blessed abode,
Through the fire, and through the sea :
Then I shall no more complain,
Never at my lot repine,
Welcome toil, or grief, or pain,
All is well, if Christ is mine."

When the grace of God in so eminent a degree, takes place in the heart, how little does every thing we suffer for his sake appear. How empty is *all* which the world calls *good* and *great*, to a soul thus filled with divine love !

From the following remarkable circumstances, it seems as if she had some apprehensions of the near approach of death. She began to be more abundantly diligent in the use of every means of grace, for some weeks before her last sickness. It was also observed, that though she had not been accustomed to pray at the Class-meeting, yet being now exceedingly fervent in spirit, one evening at Class, she broke out into earnest prayer ; she enjoyed much freedom, and great nearness to God, and was deeply affected with a sense of the evil of sin, and her own weakness, which occasioned her crying to God in such expressions as these, " O Lord ! Rather let me *die*, than live to offend, or ever sin against thee ! " Indeed the vehement importunity with which she uttered these petitions made her brethren suspect that something more than common would happen ; for the power of God was unusually present.

Soon after (on the 14th of January, 1769) she sickened for the small-pox. One then asked her,

her, how she felt her soul: she said, "My evidence is clear, and life or death, the will of the Lord be done."

During her illness, she continued perfectly resigned to the will of God. The Thursday after sickening, she became blind, when one of the Society coming in, and discerning the distemper to be dangerous, sat down and wept. As soon as she perceived it, she said, "Dolly! What are you doing! Are you weeping for me? Do not you know, that if God takes me away, it is from much evil that is in the world? I have often looked at your mother, and thought, O that I was but as near glory as her: (she being about fourscore) but now I think I am nearer glory than she is, and shall be in possession of it before her!"

Such were the affections of this happy young woman! But how different are the desires of most of her age; These alas, are promising themselves long life, and saying, "what shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and especially, wherewithal shall we be cloathed?" Yet out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God can perfect praise. The loveliness of the Lord Jesus can so powerfully attract the heart from earthly things, even in the bloom of youth, as to make us long to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which will afford us greater happiness than all the enjoyments of this vain world.

When she was asked again how she found herself, she answered, "Glory is every moment open to my soul: there is nothing between me and eternal glory, but a few moments more of light affliction."

At night she called for her father, and said to him, "Dear father, you have had man-uals and difficulties in the world, and you have many more before you; but fear not, you are

in the *way*, the *right way*, continue in it, and God will bring you through all."

On Saturday the 21st, about eleven at night, she broke out in an ecstacy of joyful praise; speaking in the most delightful language for more than an hour together, concerning Jesus and his kingdom. Some that were present on being asked what she then said, answered, we heard words not possible for men to utter; and indeed but little of the conversation could be retained by any of them, they were so overwhelmed with a sense of the presence of God.

Once she was observed to speak in the following manner, "There is never a fiend left now; they are all banished; Jesus has conquered them all for me!" By which it seems, this was her triumph in the last combat she had with Satan.

She then repeated and explained, in a most feeling and sensible manner, many passages of Scripture, especially Dan. vii. 9, 10. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool; his throne was as the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened;" Adding in the end, "O lovely Jesus! Blessed Jesus! Adorable Jesus! Glory to God in the highest! On earth peace; good-will towards men." Thus Christ's coming in the clouds to judgment, was to her infinitely desirable, and so abundantly was her soul ravished with the prospect, that she could not forbear rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory. However terrible his appearing will be to the *unprepared*, it will be a day of gladness to the righteous, yea of their eternal espousals to Christ.

While

While in health, she seemed at a loss to consent to the doom of the wicked, but now she said, "O how willing is Christ to save all that come to him! But they who will not come shall be destroyed: and though I could not for a long time say *Amen* to the sentence of impenitent sinners, yet now I can, seeing how willing God is to save *all* who will accept of his offered mercy." Surely he desireth not the death of a sinner, and therefore hath given his well-beloved Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, though it is certain, that those who believe not, shall be eternally miserable.

She likewise repeated Revelations xiv. 1, 2, 3, taking particular notice of those words, an hundred and forty four thousand, in the first and third verses: and said, "A goodly company! And I shall be *one*, and all that have died in the Lord, and all the Preachers whom I have loved, (mentioning some of them by name) and I shall see them there; and all the Methodists, that are *such indeed*; *they* shall be there." May we be *Israelites indeed*, who are so called, and not rest in a name to live while we are dead.

She again cried out, "O precious Jesus! My beloved is mine, and I am his! He is the fairest of ten thousand, yea altogether lovely. * O what glory do I see! And all for *me*! How does my soul burn with love to Jesus, who has provided it for me! I wonder that *that* happiness could have no higher title than heaven." How little can we conceive of what God has prepared for those who love him, till *he* reveals it to us by his Spirit! And then the soul is transported, like the Queen of Sheba at the sight of Solomon's glory, and can truly say of all they have heard of Jesus and his glory, the one half was not told me!

* Cant. v. 16. These were the words she chose for her funeral text.

On

On Monday the 23d, she called her father, and said, "I am going." He asked *where?* She answered "to heaven: adding, I am glad I do not leave *you*, in your sins, but that you are brought into the right way; only endure, and you will shortly follow *me*! Do not grieve for me; O resign me." He cried, "I am a wretch, I cannot resign you;" to which she answered, "*that* is nature, I was a wretch too, but God has set me at liberty; do you pray to him, and he will give you more grace." He complained "I cannot pray, do you pray for me." She said, "My bowels yearn for you;" and then lay quiet a little, interceding for him and the family; after which she broke out, "Lord, hasten thy work; do more now in my soul in a day, than thou wast wont to do in many days. She then repeated Rev. xxii. 1, and said, well may they be called the rivers, for I see fountains upon fountains; O what rivers of pleasure are there! How shall I swim in those oceans of love to all eternity! I am overcome with love! Oh if I were loose from this affliction how would I sing!" And then calling on those who were present to sing, she gave out,

"No need of the sun in that day,
Which never is followed by night,
Where Jesus's beauties display,
A pure, and a permanent light:
The Lamb is their light and their sun,
And so! by reflection they shine,
With Jesus ineffably one,
And bright in effulgence divine."

To her father she said, "You have many difficulties in the world, and I will tell you what you must do: give your hands to the world, and your heart to God, and *he* will make a way for you."

She seemed to enjoy a happy foresight of the prosperity of the work of God, when she said,

"You

" You may look for glorious times to come; for the Lord has a great work to do on earth, before the church militant can join the church triumphant." To some of the Society who were present, she said, " God has given you the *means* of *grace*, in order to bring you safe to glory; see that you do not slight nor neglect any of them; use them constantly, and look through them all to Jesus."

Afterwards one asking, how she was? She answered, " Weak in body, but happy in soul; I long to be gone to heaven." Being told, you must be resigned, she answered, " I am resigned, but would rather be with Jesus."

Some who desired to serve the Lord but were not heartily in earnest, came to see her. One of these, she had invited some time before to the Class-meeting; and he had almost promised to come, but neglected; she said to him, " I thought you would have been at the Meeting as you proposed; O how was my soul grieved that you did not come! Will you come the next time? The Methodist way is the *right way*. It was a happy turn that I was ever brought into it. O how good have I found it to remember my Creator in the days of my youth! Now I can say, " though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for the Lord is with me, his rod and staff shall comfort me." She then encouraged them heartily to join with the people of God, and not to fear any reproach they might suffer on that account.—Blessed is he that shall not be offended in me, saith Jesus. Lord grant we may never be ashamed of thy cause, servants, or people, here, and then we need not fear thy disowning us at that day.

When the disorder was at the height, she said, " Some may think that I have a *heavy* affliction. No: I have none that I can spare, Oh! it is a
happy

happy affliction!”—— While the soul thus enjoys Jesus, it rejoices in tribulation, finding that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, even a hope full of immortality.

“ Others, said she, may say of me, she was once *blooming*; how is she *altered* now? But I am as the King’s daughter, all-glorious within: and my raiment is of wrought gold.”

Sure the Lord chastens only that we may be made partakers of his holiness: and however it may be grievous for the present, yet every affliction yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who endure according to the will of God.

A little before her departure, being visited by the wife of one of the Leaders, she asked how her husband did? Adding, “ He has had many struggles to help me forward in the ways of the Lord; but now he may rejoice in all his labours, for I am going safe to glory, and hope to meet him there. O little children! Love one another.” She also advised her as she had many children, to take care what example she set before them.

Afterwards one asked, whether she thought her present sickness would end in death; she answered, “ I cannot tell; but the will of the Lord be done. Only this I know, that neither life nor death shall separate me from the love of Jesus, who has redeemed me from the foundation of the world. If I die, as soon as you see me depart, sing, “ Happy soul, thy days are ended: ” and when you carry me to the grave, sing the same hymn. When you return, do not let your hearts be filled with grief, but praise God, as I shall be rejoicing with him in glory.”

Thus she triumphed over her last enemy, death, ascribing glory to him who had given her the victory, and returned with singing to Zion,
and

and everlasting joy upon her head, before the expiration of her twentieth year; a dying witness of God's power to save even unto the *uttermost*, them that come unto him by Christ Jesus.

By this, and such like evidences of the power of inward religion, how ought our *faith* to be strengthened, our *hope* confirmed, and our *zeal* quickened for God's glory, and the salvation of our own souls, and the souls of others.

How much happier is it, for youth of either sex, so to live as thus to die, than to be employed in all the gaities and pleasures this vain world affords! May it be the constant care and steady endeavour of all such, to get and maintain that union with Jesus, which alone can make life happy, and disarm death of all his terrors. If this is indeed your desire, that you may not be disappointed in your expectations, be you found always waiting upon God, in every means he has appointed. Be willing to forego what the world falsely calls *pleasure*, that you may *here experience* the foretaste of bliss, and may hereafter *fully enjoy* those rivers of pleasure, which flow from God's right-hand for evermore.

A H Y M N,

sung at the time of her departure.

1 **H**APPY soul, thy days are ended,
 All thy mourning days below;
 Go, by angel-guards attended,
 To the sight of Jesus go.
 Hallelujah, Amen.

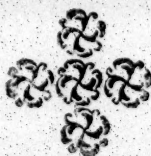
Waiting to receive thy Spirit,
 Lo the Saviour stands above,

Shews

Shews the purchase of his merit,
Reaches out the crown of love.

3 Struggle through thy latest passion,
To thy dear Redeemer's breast,
To his uttermost salvation,
To thine everlasting rest.

4 For the joy he sets before thee
Bear a momentary pain ;
Die, to live the life of glory,
Suffer with thy Lord to reign :



E I N D,